
The world's oldest surviving Bible has been pieced together and made available on the internet. The 1,600-year-old "Codex Sinaiticus" was split up after its discovery in the 18th Century. Here's our Religious Affairs Correspondent Robert Pigott:

Before the Codex Sinaiticus was **compiled** and **bound** less than 400 years after Jesus' crucifixion, most Bibles were written on collections of **scrolls**. The 1,400 **parchment** pages of the Codex - which was named after its discovery in Sinai - were **scattered between** St Petersburg, Leipzig, London and Egypt, but each page has now been digitally photographed and collected on a single web-site.

900 of the 16 by 14 inch pages survive, each bearing four **neat** columns of Classical Greek. Careful study reveals **passages** that have been questioned and **altered repeatedly** over the centuries.

The British Library, which begins an exhibition of the Codex Sinaiticus today, said **the book gave first-hand evidence** of how the text of the Bible had been **transmitted** from generation to generation.

Robert Pigott, BBC

Vocabulary and definitions

compiled	put together
bound	made into a book - by fastening together separate pieces of paper, parchment (see below) or other material used for writing
scrolls	rolls of paper, parchment (see below) or other material used for writing
parchment	a yellowish material made from dried and treated animal skin which in the old days was used for writing
scattered between	located in different places, such as
neat	orderly, tidy
passages	here, extracts, short pieces of writing that are part of a larger work
altered repeatedly	changed many times
the book gave first-hand evidence	the book provided new, original proof
transmitted	here, passed

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